



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: April 27, 2010

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Planning Division, Community Development Department

SUBJECT: Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO) Two-Year Review

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Introduce and subsequently adopt, by reading of title only, An Ordinance of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Amending Titles 22 and 28 of the Santa Barbara Municipal Code Relating to the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance, Single Family Residence Parking Design Standards, and the Expiration of Design Review Approvals; and
- B. Adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara to Adopt Revised Single Family Residential Design Guidelines and Revised Single Family Design Board Guidelines.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The original Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO) was adopted in 1991 and established design review standards for some two-story single-family residential projects for in-fill neighborhoods and provided new guidelines for hillside projects. In 2004 to 2007, the City completed an extensive update to the NPO, resulting in creation of the Single Family Design Board (SFDB), updated Single Family Residential Design Guidelines (SFRDG) and new ordinance provisions, including house size limits and guidelines by lot size (Floor to Lot Area Ratios, or "FARs"). When the Council adopted the NPO Update package in May 2007, direction was given for a brief review of the updates to occur in two years so that any necessary adjustments could be made.

Staff has followed direction provided by Council on December 15, 2009 to implement ordinance and guideline amendments related to a two-year review of the NPO Update. Staff has met with the Single Family Design Board (SFDB), the Planning Commission (PC), the Ordinance Committee and the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) for review of proposed changes. The SFDB, PC, Ordinance Committee and HLC unanimously supported the majority of proposed changes presented. The two uncovered parking space option elicited concern from some SFDB and PC members due to issues of minimum required storage, screening, square footage distribution, and neighborhood compatibility. Staff adjusted the two uncovered parking proposal to address each item of

concern. One member of the Ordinance Committee is opposed to increasing the Built Green requirement from two to three stars for large residences. For other topics, the proposed updates are not controversial and unanimous support among the hearing bodies was expressed.

DISCUSSION:

On December 15, 2009, City Council:

- Initiated changes recommended in the “Two-Year Review of Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance/Single Family Design Guidelines Update (NPO Update)”; with staff to work with a subcommittee of the SFDB and the Ordinance Committee; and
- Directed staff to return to Council with ordinance and guideline amendments for adoption.

Staff has followed the direction provided by Council on December 15, 2009.

I. Public Review Process

Following is a list of the meetings which occurred in 2009 to formulate the NPO Update Two-Year Review revisions list.

- Meetings with concerned organizations: late Summer/early Fall ‘09
- SFDB: 9/14/09, 10/12/09, and 11/9/09
- Public workshop at Santa Barbara Public Library: 10/24/09
- Initial Council direction: 12/15/09

Following is a list of the meetings which occurred in 2010 to finalize the language in guideline and ordinance documents to implement the list of revisions.

- SFDB: 3/1/10, 3/15/10 & 4/12/10, as well as three SFDB Subcommittee meetings.
- PC review of subdivision grading project guidelines and uncovered parking space proposals: 3/4/10
- Ordinance Committee: 3/30/10
- HLC: 4/14/10

II. Ordinance and Guideline Revisions Summary

Revisions to the ordinance and guidelines are listed below by topic. Additional minor corrections and revisions have also been included in the SFRDG and SFDB Guidelines.

A. Revisions directed by Council 12-15-10

Noticing. Eliminate noticing for additions of less than 150 square feet to existing second stories or higher (SBMC 22.69.040.A.3 and .4). Reduce hand-delivered noticing to the closest 10 lots, rather than the closest 20 lots (SBMC 22.22.132.C and 22.69.040.C). Maintain the standard 300 foot mailing noticing radius.

Design Review Triggers. Clarify and simplify the trigger for Design Review for roof alterations in the Hillside Design District (SBMC 22.69.020.B.2.b). Change the trigger for Design Review for walls, fences or gates in front yards from six feet and greater in height to greater than 3.5 feet in height (SBMC 22.69.020.C.8).

Staff Administrative Approvals. Broaden staff authority to approve:

- more types of site walls
- black chain link fencing outside of front yards
- projects that are not “publicly visible”, as newly defined in the SFDB Guidelines

One Uncovered Parking Space Encroachments. Disallow uncovered parking encroachments on large lots for single-family residential projects that propose an uncovered parking space. Also, permeable paving is required where feasible (SBMC 28.90.100.G.1.b).

Green Building Standard for Large Residences. Update the Ordinance to clarify that green building programs equivalent to the Santa Barbara Contractor Association’s Built Green program are acceptable for homes over 4,000 square feet (See SBMC 22.69.055 and 22.22.131). Exempt additions of less than 500 square feet from the green building requirement (SBMC 22.69.055 and 22.22.131). Clarify that both Historic Landmarks Commission and SFDB single family home projects resulting in over 4,000 square feet are subject to the Built Green requirement (SBMC 22.22.131). In addition, per December 15th, 2009 Council direction, the Ordinance proposes a three-star Built Green requirement for applicable large home projects, rather than the current two-star built green requirement. One Ordinance Committee member opposes the change from two to three stars due to potential increased costs to applicants to meet this requirement. Green building proponents assert that up-front green building costs are typically only two percent and that the utility cost savings and increased structure valuations more than make up for the additional initial investment due to long term improved building performance as well as health benefits due to improved indoor air quality (see attachment).

SFRDG Revisions

- Additional covered porches, decks and loggia guidelines
- Further guidance in applying Floor to Lot Area Ratio (FAR) guidelines to lots over 15,000 square feet
- 20 closest homes data usage information
- Glass railing guideline revision
- Additional basement design guidance
- Lighting guidelines revisions
- Fence and wall additions in “Good Neighbor Guidelines and Tips” section

SFDB Guideline Revisions

- New subdivision grading plan review guidelines
- Eliminate vacant lot review procedure
- Artificial plants and turf specified as not allowed in landscaping guidelines

SFDRG and SFDB Guidelines Revisions

- Additional parking design guidelines
- Additional creeks and water conservation references

B. Additional Revisions

In addition to the changes directed by Council in December, the following changes are included in the ordinance and guideline revisions. These changes were recognized as necessary during implementation of the other revision items.

Design Review Expirations. Clarification as to how Design Review expirations are handled for projects, in particular for projects with multiple approvals, is included in proposed sections 22.22.180, 22.68.110, and 22.69.090 and a refinement to the basement net floor area calculation procedures is included in 28.15.083.B.1.b. SFDB Guidelines updates also reflect these clarifications. These changes also affect multi-family and commercial projects which the HLC and ABR review.

Basement Net Floor Area Calculation Clarification. Refine the basement net floor area calculation procedures allow for a five-foot entry (28.15.083.B.1.b).

Modification procedures in SFDB Guidelines. New guidance for the SFDB and HLC as to their role and procedures for commenting on modifications of yard, lot and floor area regulations is provided in the SFDB Guidelines. Vote procedures for FAR zoning modifications requests is also clarified.

Municipal Code & Tree Information Updates to SFRDG & SFDB Guidelines. Recent changes to the Santa Barbara Municipal Code (Chapters 15.24 and 22.11) related to yard, setback, open yard and tree preservation requirements are now reflected in the "Supplemental Information" chapter of the SFRDG. SFDB Guidelines Appendices A & B regarding water conservation and fire sprinkler requirements are also updated.

C. Portable Accessory Structures.

In December 2009, Council requested a response regarding the issue of portable accessory structures or storage containers being placed in front of residences. Accessory structures are only allowed to be located outside of front yards, not within interior yards and not allowed to block access to parking. Placement of these portable structures in prohibited locations would constitute a zoning violation. Accessory structures are also subject to design review when another project aspect triggers design review, such as a two-story project component or steep hillside site condition. Incorrect portable accessory placement is an enforcement issue which is addressed on a case by case basis. New regulations to limit the use of portable accessory structures are not recommended at this time.

III. Two Uncovered Parking Spaces

This option allows case by case waivers which could be granted by the SFDB for two uncovered parking spaces for homes under 80% of the maximum FAR outside any front yards. Design Review would be required for the uncovered parking spaces. Two uncovered parking spaces typically require only 333 square feet (18' by 18.5'), whereas a two-car garage requires 400 square feet (interior 20' by 20'). During the review of the NPO Update, staff recognized that defining when two uncovered parking spaces may be acceptable could bring substantial benefits in achieving storm water quality goals, street friendly home facades, increased housing affordability and flexibility for constrained and non-conforming lots. However, modifications to the covered parking ordinance requirement to allow two uncovered spaces have traditionally not been supported for single family development. Staff presented potential benefits and disadvantages of studying this provision to the Council as an option for further consideration in December 2009. Council directed staff to study the option.

Minimum standards were drafted for consideration as well as supporting factors for the exception for inclusion in the SFDB Guidelines. Initial response from some SFDB and PC members regarding a modification process for two uncovered parking spaces was negative and staff worked to address concerns. The proposed ordinance contains revisions crafted to address concerns expressed by PC and SFDB members. The ordinance proposal requires the following for an exception to allow two-uncovered rather than the standard two covered parking spaces (SBMC 28.90.100.G.1.c, 22.69.020.C.12, and 22.22.132.A.9):

- no more than 80% of the maximum floor to lot area for the property's lot size is allowed
- 120 square feet minimum of exterior storage
- screening of the parking space
- permeable paving
- SFDB review and approval for appropriate high quality design and details. Also, the SFDB must find the project consistent with Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance findings, including neighborhood compatibility findings

The ordinance changes, including creating an exception requiring SFDB approval rather than a modification process, resulted in a majority positive vote from the SFDB on this option at the SFDB's March 15, 2010 and April 12, 2010 meetings. The Ordinance Committee also recommends this option for Council adoption.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

Guideline changes reduce staff's workload in response to budget constraints. The guideline changes include some shifts of projects away from full board SFDB review toward either less labor intensive Consent Calendars or Administrative (staff) review. Some changes proposed in the ordinance revisions will result in slight decreases in staff workload (noticing, Design Review triggers and green building requirement adjustments) and some will result in insignificant increases (Design Review triggers).

NOTE: Copies of the following documents have been provided to the Mayor and Council and are available for public viewing at the City Clerk's office:

- Existing adopted versions of the SFRDG and SFDB Guidelines (available on-line at www.santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Home/Guidelines/)
- December 15, 2009 Council Agenda Report: Two-Year Review of Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance Update (available on-line at www.santabarbaraca.gov/CAP/)
- Guideline Revisions for the SFRDG and SFDB Guidelines (available on-line at www.santabarbaraca.gov/Resident/Major_Planning_Efforts/NPO/)
- Public comment letters submitted to the SFDB for its 4-12-10 hearing and Ordinance Committee for its 3-30-10 hearing.

ATTACHMENT: Letter from Santa Barbara Built Green regarding green building costs

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APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office



April 22, 2010

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HOW MUCH DOES GREEN BUILDING REALLY COST?

Green building skeptics sometimes argue that it's difficult or even impossible to build green without paying a big cost premium. But real-world examples show that you can complete a Built Green certified green building project for an average of 2 percent more in upfront costs, and often times even below standard market construction costs. Plus, any extra first costs you pay can be recovered through faster lease-up rates, rental premiums and increased market valuation. And by making experienced green building professionals a part of your team and learning to control costs, you can escape paying any green premium at all.

A green building saves through lower operating costs over the life of the building. The green building approach applies a project life cycle cost analysis for determining the appropriate up-front expenditure. This analytical method calculates costs over the useful life of the asset. Even with a tight budget, many green building measures can be incorporated with minimal or zero increased up-front costs and they can yield enormous savings. A Built Green 3-Star versus 2-Star rating roughly doubles the energy savings and reduces the monthly debt and utility costs.

A 2004 study by Davis Langdon Adamson, a construction cost-planning and management company, found that the first costs of constructing a sustainable building tend to match or only slightly exceed those of comparable non-green buildings. The study, *Costing Green: A Comprehensive Cost Database and Budgeting Methodology*, measured the square-foot construction costs of 61 buildings seeking certification under the USGBC - LEED green building rating system against those of buildings of similar type that did not aim for sustainability. Taking into account a range of construction factors including climate, location, market conditions and local standards, the study found that for many of the green projects, pursuing LEED certification had little or no budgetary impact.

The study's findings also underline that incorporating and integrating green features into a project early is critical to the success of any green building project. "It is the choices made during design which will ultimately determine whether a building can be sustainable, not the budget set," the report concluded.

In addition, in order to accurately evaluate the impact of green building on your budget, it's important to look beyond first costs. Increasingly, architects, builders and procurement specialists are using "life-cycle assessments" (LCA) to evaluate and quantify the economic and environmental costs and benefits of materials and products over their lives. LCA analysis methods are becoming more standardized and tools are emerging to provide comparable product-level evaluations.

We welcome your questions and comments.

Sincerely,

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